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Diana T Fritz 05/24/2007 04:36:34 PM From DB/Inbox: Search Results

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SIPDIS
TELEGRAM

April 07, 2003

To: No Action Addressee
Action: Unknown
From: AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI (ABU DHABI 1661 - UNKNOWN)
TAGS: EAID, PREL, PGOV, PHUM
Captions: None
Subject: TFIZ01: FRUSTRATED BY ICRC IDLENESS, UAE RED CRESCENT
AUTHORITY DECIDES TO GO IT ALONE
Ref: None

C O N F I D E N T I A L ABU DHABI 01661

SIPDIS
CXABU:
ACTION: POL
INFO: ECON RSO AMB P/M DCM

DISSEMINATION: POL
CHARGE: PROG

APPROVED: DCM:RAALBRIGHT
DRAFTED: ECON:CCRUMPLER
CLEARED: ECON:TWILLIAMS, POL:STWILLIAMS

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DE RUEHAD #1661/01 0971256
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FM AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9291
INFO RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
RUMICEA/USCINCENT INTEL CEN MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEHDE/AMCONSUL DUBAI PRIORITY 3006
RUEHKU/AMEMBASSY KUWAIT 0835

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ABU DHABI 001661

SIPDIS

STATE FOR IRAQ TASK FORCE, ALSO NEA/ARP, NEA/RA,
PRM/ANE, AND IO/UNP
KUWAIT FOR HOC

E.O. 12958: DECL 04/07/13
TAGS: [EAID](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [IZ](#) [TC](#)
SUBJECT: TFIZ01: FRUSTRATED BY ICRC IDLENESS, UAE RED
CRESCENT AUTHORITY DECIDES TO GO IT ALONE

REFS: ABU DHABI 1602 AND PREVIOUS

[1](#)1. (U) Classified by DCM Richard A. Albright for
reasons 1.5 (B) and (D).

[1](#)2. (C) Summary and comment: The UAE Red Crescent
Authority (RCA) hosted on 4/6 in Abu Dhabi a forum of
international aid organizations to discuss the

humanitarian situation in Iraq. This was the first major meeting of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and the national societies of the UAE, Jordan, Turkey, Iran, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, and Qatar since the war in Iraq began. Frustrated by the outcome of the meeting and ICRC's continued refusal to permit the national societies immediate entry into Iraq, the UAE RCA has decided to circumvent ICRC channels and organize a major humanitarian shipment (leaving the UAE for Umm Qasr on 4/8) directly through AmEmbassy Abu Dhabi and the HOC. We continue to coordinate the details of this shipment with the HOC in Kuwait, CENTCOM, and NAVCENT, all of which recognize the political sensitivities and are helping us manage this delicate situation. End summary and comment.

ICRC Refuses To Cooperate With National Societies

13. (C) UAE Red Crescent Authority (RCA) Secretary General San'a Al-Kitbi confirmed to Econoff on 4/7 that the ICRC heretofore has sought to prevent national Red Crescent Societies from entering Iraq. The ICRC argues that the security situation in many areas of Iraq is too dangerous for Red Crescent workers, and the Iraqi Government has refused access to regime-controlled areas. (Note: ICRC typically requires permission from all parties to a conflict before it can begin humanitarian operations. End note.)

14. (C) Al-Kitbi reported that ICRC had interdicted national societies' humanitarian convoys into Iraq, and taken possession of the humanitarian supplies at the border under the pretense that ICRC staff would distribute the items. According to Al-Kitbi, it is well known that the ICRC has only minimal staff in Iraq and therefore warehouses the goods for later distribution. "Our workers know the risks and dangers, but we must be with the people of Iraq," said Al-Kitbi. "This is the purpose of the Red Crescent."

15. (C) According to Al-Kitbi, the national societies' delegates convened in Abu Dhabi yesterday to insist that the ICRC allow them to enter Iraq. The exchange between the ICRC and national societies reportedly was heated (Al-Kitbi said the societies are "fed-up" with the ICRC) and the delegates threatened not to coordinate with the ICRC in the future, if better cooperation is not forthcoming. Although the ICRC finally agreed to ship (or to facilitate shipment) humanitarian supplies overland from Kuwait and Syria, it did not indicate when such shipments would begin.

UAE Red Crescent Decides To Act Now

16. (C) Although Al-Kitbi was pleased with the agreement reached yesterday with the ICRC, she believes it will be a number of days (or weeks) before ICRC acts. As an alternate and last resort, the UAE Government has requested Embassy assistance to coordinate safe passage of a 700-ton shipment of RCA humanitarian supplies to Umm Qasr with the HOC. Al-Kitbi noted that the RCA (as a fundamental part of its doctrine) does not work with militaries to provide aid, but the UAE leadership realizes that coordination with Coalition forces is crucial in this case to move and distribute the humanitarian supplies in Iraq.

17. (C) She noted that the ICRC is unaware of the shipment, and asked that the Embassy refrain from notifying the ICRC or the media of RCA plans to travel to Umm Qasr later this week. Al-Kitbi noted that an ICRC representative she contacted directly (at the

suggestion of the HOC) told her that the RCA ship would not be allowed to dock in Umm Qasr because of the security situation.

18. (C) Al-Kitbi noted that the Bahraini and Qatari Red Crescent Societies likewise are frustrated with the ICRC. They understand that the UAE RCA plans to circumvent ICRC channels and send aid directly to Iraq, and asked Al-Kitbi yesterday about consolidating shipments for the region. She thought it probable that -- if this first shipment to Umm Qasr proves successful -- similar requests for additional RCA shipments (perhaps including relief supplies from other national societies via the UAE RCA) would follow.

Wahba